

Absolutely not!

Further

consolidation in the cable industry is a clear violation of horizontal ownership rules that must be re-established to serve the public interest.

Media concentration kills the diversity of programming and voices reaching American households.

The growing number of channels may be a clever façade for diversity, but it really is not, and more people are catching on every day.

A merger of Comcast, Time-Warner, and Adelphia would form a regional monopoly—a very large regional monopoly, considering that this new market would comprise roughly half of all cable subscribers. Having formed a monopoly, what would

stop this new
mega-corporation
from committing
price-gouging on
people who simply
cannot afford it?
Just look to
American history,
with cases like
Standar Oil, for
past evidence of the
immense greed that
monopolies breed.

I am growing
increasingly
dissatisfied with my
cable rates and
services. Before the
1996
Telecommunications
Act began taking
effect, I would
eagerly tune in to
networks like TLC
for its \"Great
Books\" series, or
A&E for its various
arts programmes, or
Bravo for its
regular showing of
foreign films.
Today, however,
these networks have
become a collective
dumping ground for
trashy reality
programmes that I
would not give a

second thought.
Truthfully speaking,
if it were not for
C-Span and C-Span 2,
I would cancel my
cable altogether.

Exciting networks,
such as Free Speech
TV, Link TV, C-Span
3, BBC World News,
and Independent
World News, are
available on some
satellite outlets
but are next to
non-existent on most
cable outlets.

Likewise, in terms
of local access from
Insight
Communications
(which serves
Louisville, KY and
southern Indiana),
the only things that
even passes for
local access are
videotapes of the
most recent high
school graduation
(two months ago!).
Combined with the
programming on most
of my cable lineup,
this is an egregious
waste of my time and
money.

What I would recommend is that all cable companies be required to have an à la carte option. That is, customers should have an opportunity to purchase and pay for only the channels that they want. Consumers would save money, and, if cable companies stepped up to the plate and started offering genuine diversity, they have a potential for increased profits and customer satisfaction.

I do receive local channels, but they rarely focus on issues that are of serious interest to the community. For instance, I know that I am more likely to die from side effects of pollution in the city of Louisville than I am at the

hands of a strange
African American man
who may or may not
have acted in a gang
shooting. However,
the local news will
spend too much time
on black male
"suspects," while
paying no attention
to issues like
pollution, the
increasing
corporatisation of
our local community,
laws passed by local
city councils and
state governments,
etc. Like national
media outlets (such
as CNN, MSNBC, and
Fox News), local
channels are more
likely to promote
fear than report
news. Long story
short, I have
learned to depend on
local papers and the
Internet for local
news. At this point
in time, television
is in a very sorry
state.

As for
entertainment, the
only source to which
I turn is PBS. At

least British
comedies require
active thought
processes, which is
more than I can say
for the garbage that
dominates television
today.